

NSC BRIEFING

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18 June 1958

DE GAULLE'S TWO WEEKS

- I. De Gaulle is working to consolidate his position, and is taking quick steps to solve the pressing North African problems.
- A. He appears to have narrowed the rift between Algeria and Metropolitan France. His statements on Algeria vague enough to give all elements something favorable.
1. Extremists and some military still restive.
  2. De Gaulle aiming to put army in complete control because he believes it more moderate and tractable than civilian elements. Once army's position assured, he intends proceed with elections which he hopes will produce representatives with whom he can negotiate definite settlement.
- B. The Algerian rebels have reacted unfavorably to De Gaulle's apparent espousal of an "integration" policy and reject his proposed elections. They continue to insist that French recognition of Algerian independence is the only acceptable basis for ending the guerrilla war.
1. However, rebels show great concern over the possible effects on Algerian Moslems of De Gaulle's promise of political equality.
  2. Rebels are conducting "educational" campaign among people.

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C. De Gaulle has moved quickly to mollify Tunisia and Morocco.

DOS REVIEW COMPLETED

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1. Agreement of 17 June providing for staged French evacuation of some 9,000 troops from outlying bases in Tunisia should reduce French-Tunisian tension. New difficulties possible during evacuation process, and subsequent negotiation of status of Bizerte, where 13,000 troops remain because of French insistence on permanent retention of the base.
  2. Announcement 14 June that France agrees to evacuate 10 small military posts in eastern and southern Morocco have alleviated friction somewhat but Morocco will continue to ask withdrawal of 30,000 ground troops and agreement on status of 16,000 French air and navy personnel.
  3. French efforts to reach agreements with Morocco and Tunisia may be hampered by FLN pressure on both at current conference in Tunis.
- II. At home, De Gaulle is moving to obtain wide support for his program.
- A. Despite rightist objections, De Gaulle has brought a half-dozen more politicians into his cabinet, ranging from Socialists to Gaullists.
  - B. He has made conciliatory moves to labor, including an offer--not accepted--of a cabinet post to a secretary of the Communist-dominated General Labor Confederation (CGT).
- III. However, rightists are still pressing De Gaulle to "complete the revolution" begun in Algeria. Extremists want an end to the present parliamentary system and the formation of a "true government of public safety."

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- A. Delbecque calls 13 May action only the first phase of the revolution adding that "we did not cross the Rubicon to go fishing."
  - 1. He claims 320 committees of public safety in France and intends to form a nation-wide committee.
- B. Poujade has decided to work with the French Committees.
- C. Retired Air Force General Chassin has announced the formation of his "Popular Movement of 13 May."
- D. Poujade and Chassin groups will not carry much weight.

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- [Redacted]
- IV. Rightist activities give the French Communists a fresh opportunity to pose as champions of the republic.
- A. An all-out anti-De Gaulle program is handicapped by:
    - 1. Fear of alienating non-Communist elements they hope to draw into an eventual Popular Front government,
    - 2. Reported widespread apathy of Communist rank and file; some have attitude of "give De Gaulle a chance."
  - B. In addition the USSR continues to take a cautious attitude toward De Gaulle publicly in order not to prejudice its future diplomatic relations with him.

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1. Moscow has publicized the sharp French Communist attacks on him to show its support of the party--including the Duclos interview charging that De Gaulle is seeking to build a fascist movement.
  2. Khrushchev sent De Gaulle a friendly congratulatory message on his accession, however, and Moscow's first editorial comment in Pravda criticized De Gaulle only for "tolerating or encouraging" right-wing movements.
- V. Regarding relations with the West, De Gaulle has again transmitted some of his views through Socialist Minister of State Guy Mollet whom he has designated to handle "Anglo-Saxon" foreign affairs.
- A. Though De Gaulle would have preferred some of the European agreements, Euratom, Common Market, and others, to have been conceived differently, France will honor her commitments.
  - B. He considers the French should play a stronger role and a more effective role in NATO.
  - C. He favors a more positive approach to the USSR aimed at putting the Russians on the defensive.
  - D. He wants Mollet to come to the US to explain his policies.

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